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**Cover:** The destruction at the 8<sup>th</sup>-century AD Great Umayyad Mosque in Aleppo, which caught fire in August 2012. Besides the severe damage to the prayer hall and the *mihrab* (niche), precious Islamic and Pre-Islamic manuscripts were lost due in the conflagration that occurred in the library attached to the mosque (March 2013). The destruction of this and other cultural monuments in Syria are the subject of the article in this issue by Cunliffe and Muhesen. (© Corbis Image)

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